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Computer
Association of
Orange
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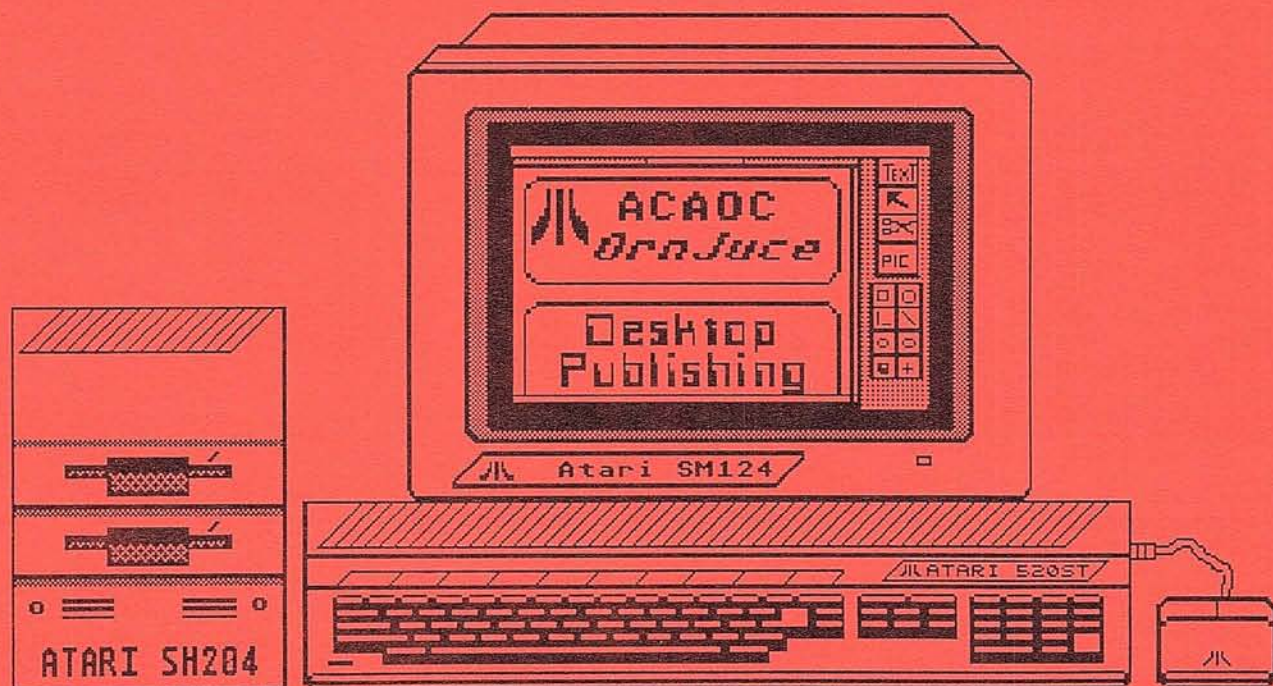
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OrnJuce

Volume 8, Number 4

July 1987

Desktop Publishing Meets the OrnJuce!



We were going to tell
you all about

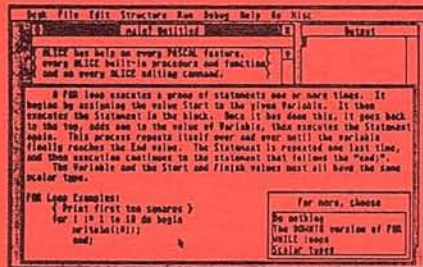
ALICE

The Personal Pascal

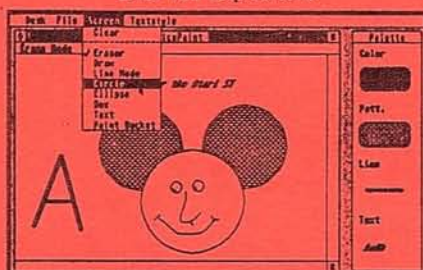
but we'd rather show
you . . .



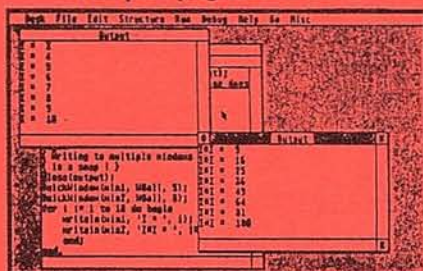
You program from "templates"



Over 700 help screens



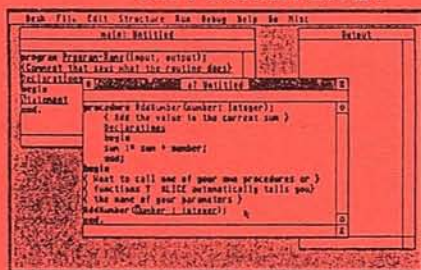
Free paint program with source



Your programs can do windows!



Powerful variable trace



Multiple window editing

Programming Made Easy

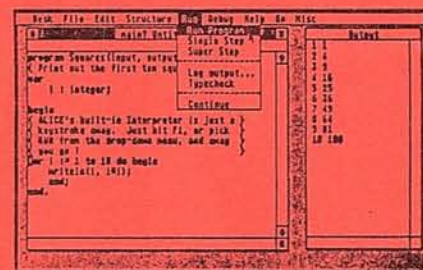
If you're into programming, or if you want to be, you won't find a better system for your Atari ST than ALICE: The Personal Pascal. Already popular on the IBM-PC, ALICE now brings easy, interactive programming to the Atari ST.

ALICE is, without question, the best way around to learn about computers and programming. Beginners can even order our ALICE based textbook for only \$19.95 with ALICE.

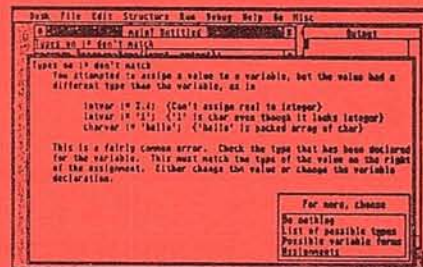
Even if you're an expert, ALICE makes it easier to write, test and especially debug programs. ALICE's extensive Pascal improvements include a GEM interface even beginners can use and most of the extensions of Turbo Pascal. The surrounding examples just give a glimpse at how easy it is to put programs together using ALICE.



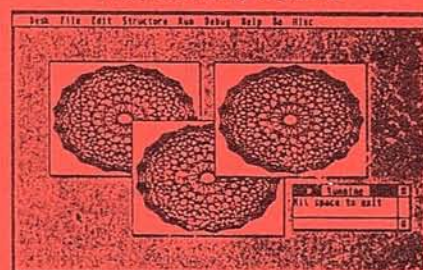
Breakpoints, Single Step



Instant-run Pascal interpreter



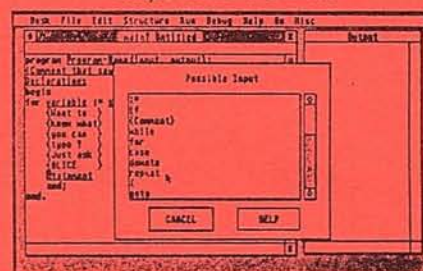
Every error fully explained



Easy graphics in windows



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Ask for possible input at any time

"If I needed to learn Pascal all over again, or were going to teach a course in the language, I can't imagine using any program other than ALICE."

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— Gene Wilburn, Computing Canada

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ACAOC OrnJuce

Volume 8, Number 4
July, 1987

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All articles are available on Atari 400/800/XL/XE 5.25" and Atari ST 3.5" format disks to other publications sending a blank disk and self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The deadline for OrnJuce article submissions is no later than the 24th of the month preceeding that issue.

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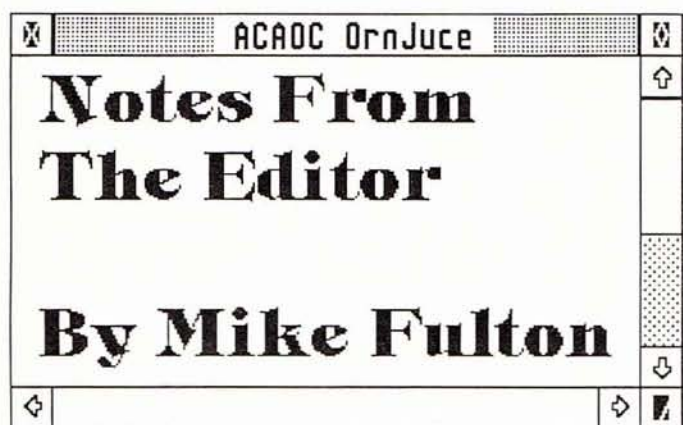
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I'm gonna be able to have a bit more fun with my column again. While I was President, I didn't always have the chance to just chat a bit with everyone, and I missed that.

Book of the Month

This month I have a book I'd like to recommend to some of you. It's not about computers, although there are a few, including Gay Deceiver and Dora, who might be familiar to some of you. It's titled *To Sail Beyond The Sunset* by Robert A. Heinlein.

Those of you who are Robert Heinlein fans, I advise you to jump down to your local bookstore. It's an "autobiography" of Maureen Johnson Smith, the mother of the infamous Heinlein character Lazarus Long. It tracks her from the time of her girlhood to the current timeline of Lazarus Long.

Although this book is great, I would recommend to those people who haven't read other Heinlein books to read his earlier stuff before this, in chronological order of publication if possible. Mr. Heinlein's latest few books, including this one, have tied together most of his entire body of work, and that would mean a lot of confusing references without the proper background.

Robert A. Heinlein is required reading for any serious science fiction fan. Although I can easily recommend every single book or story he has ever written, at a minimum I'd suggest reading *The Past Through Tomorrow*, *The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress*, *Stranger In a Strange Land*, *Time Enough For Love*, *The Number of the Beast*, and *The Cat Who Walks Through Walls*, in that order.

Soul of a New OrnJuce

This month marks the first time I have used the desktop publishing program **Publishing Partner**, for the Atari ST, in the preparation of the OrnJuce.

Even before I'd seen the program, I realized that I probably would not want to use Publishing Partner in doing the OrnJuce if I was restricted to the output produced by a dot-matrix printer. Although it is actually pretty good, the text produced by Publishing Partner on a dot-matrix printer does not really compare with the text from a daisy wheel printer. And I had grown accustomed to the quality of text produced by the club's Diablo 620 daisy wheel printer.

Using a laser printer was another matter. I had seen the results you could obtain with Publishing Partner by using a laser printer, and they were excellent. However, there was no laser printer on the desk next to my computer then, and there still isn't. What's more, I can't imagine there being one on my desk anytime soon.

So, although Publishing Partner was an interesting program, and produced results equal to or better than anything else on a dot-matrix printer, I felt it would be a step down, quality-wise, to use it to produce the OrnJuce. So what's the deal with this issue? Well, I think it should be obvious! This was printed on a laser printer!

At Cal Com, the store where I work, we recently obtained a HP LaserJet laser printer which we since upgraded with a Postscript board. For those who don't know what Postscript is, let me explain. Basically, it is a programming language designed around page layout work. It allows you to take advantage of all the resolution available on the output device. Besides smaller laser printers, which allow 300 dots per inch, Postscript is also available on larger photo typesetting machines, which generally allow from 1270-2580, and more, dots per inch.

I've worked out a deal with Cal Com to trade laser printer output for advertising credit. And you can see the finished results. What do you think?

Using Publishing Partner will give me more flexibility in creating page layouts. I can now integrate pictures and different text sizes and styles very easily.

Well, I just wanted to give you a bit of an introduction to the new look of the OrnJuce. Let me know what you think!

By the way, I will now be accepting submissions to the OrnJuce in Publishing Partner format. This will allow anyone who wants to include illustrations of any kind a bit more so in the final version. Keep in mind however, that it has to fit in with the rest of the issue. Use this issue as a guideline if you need to.



ACAOC Club News

General Meeting

At the June 14 ACAOC meeting the annual elections were held. The members present voted for both the ACAOC Board of Directors, and for the club officers.

ACAOC Board of Directors 1987-1988

1. John Barreras
2. Erika Bentley
3. Bob Brodie
4. Bob Brooks
5. Mike Fulton
6. Kevin Hammel
7. Rick Meredith

ACAOC Officers 1987-1988

President ----- Bob Brodie
 Vice President --- Rick Meredith
 Treasurer ----- Erika Bentley
 Secretary ----- John Barreras
 Editor ----- Mike Fulton
 ST librarian ----- Garry Jones
 8 bit librarian -- Sharon Brown

June ACAOC Meeting Report

Sye Keene ran Random Access. Among the topics discussed were the FCC discussions regarding a tax on packet network systems such as PC pursuit. Also discussed was the new OrnJuce Magazine policy now accepting articles in Publishing Partner format, new types of modems, and Dick Tracy. Bob Brodie talked about some low prices on modems. The following establishments were reported to be selling modems at affordable prices: P&H Computers in Fountain Valley is selling the Signalman 2400 baud modem for \$185.00. A&J Computer supply in Seal Beach is selling the Avatex HC for 79.99.

Garry Jones demoed the ST Library's Disk of

the Month which contained some utilities. Doug Ewell demoed Strip Poker for the 8 bit and Bob Brodie demonstrated Certificate Maker for the ST.

The snackbar again proved to be a success. If the interest in it continues to be high, it will continue. However, due to the rules of the college, we must ask that you do not eat in the room.

June ACAOC Business Meeting

At the June ACAOC Business meeting, the following topics were discussed:

1. Acquiring software and other items so that a drawing can be held more frequently.
2. Disk prices for the Library were reviewed. They are; ST disks at \$4 each and 8 bit disks at \$3 for regular and \$4 for the disk of the month.
3. Ways to get input from the members on things they would like to see from the club.
4. Future guest speakers.
5. Obtaining a large screen TV so that members can see the demonstrations more easily.
6. Reminding members that we have Analog disks in our library. There is a 1 month delay in this, (i.e. selling the January disk in February).
7. Letting publications know of the clubs existence.

An Open Letter to Infocom Players

Our Editor, Mike, has been after Bill and me to write some reviews for the OrnJuce of the newest Infocom games. It's true that we are Infocom nuts and have almost all of their games, but we have not had much time to play any game on the computer lately.

Bill is now working at home and both computers are usually operating on optic system design and report writing. Secondly, we would like to know what others think about Infocom games. We know we would rather play them than any other game, but our reviews would be one sided and prejudicial.

So please get us off the hook. Won't someone else write a review of some Infocom game - new or old - so that Mike gets off our back?

P.S. I have spent 20 hours on club business this month - have you? -- Erika B.

Expired Memberships

Suzanne Berkaw, Bill Bichel, Robert Brodie, Eldon Clark, Mark H. Davis, Jerry Eddinton, Bradly Scott Erwin, Siegfried Fascher, Doug Fassett, Mike Fulton, David L. Gallivan, Mike Gilbertson, Jeff Johnson, Russell Kavanagh, Donald Kincaid, Sandor Lengyel, Gordon Lippencott, John A. Myers, Patrick O'Brien, Paul O'Malley, Al Paris, John Peel, Adan Ramirez, Randall Rieseck, Donald Thompson, Pete Wilson, Dennis Yeager.

The above members have until next meeting to renew. If you are BBS users you will be changed from registered to non-registered the day after the next meeting, remember only you can prevent missed issues of the OrnJuce

June Membership Expirations

Doug Anderson, Jim Bertok, Jeff Bertuleit, James Brophy, Larry Brown, Charles Everts, Jim Fleming, Charles French, Jon Green, Leroy Hanlyn, Hal Held, John Hersberger, Philip Jakubik, Doug Keller, Richard Lindquist, Michael Lingo, Craig Moulton, Jack Rodrigues, Ronald Roslawski, Loe Roth, George Shultz, Andrew Tait, Jay Tomlinson, Ron Wonsetler, William Wright.

July Membership Expirations

Le Roy Bainbridge, Harry Brice, Kerim Broadbent, Bert Chalawsky, Bill Cousert, Steve Dixon, Donald Foster, William Hanson, William Jimenez, Mike Kirkbride, Jim Kline, John Lavrakas, Mike Mace, A.L. Merrill, Leo Moos, Rick Charles, Dan Sherlock, Robert Stroup, Dave Carpenter.

I have been remiss in not welcoming new members the last few issues (with some help from me, I'm afraid -- *Mike*). So belatedly, but with an extra big "thank you for joining us", welcome to our newest members

Lincoln Mulkey, Mike Kruidhof (a BBS user), Hugh Benson, Bill Padden, Fred Schultz, John J. Irwin (father and son) Barbara Dugan, Matthew Stern, Patrik Mullen, James Hollis, Robert Goslin (all the way from Marrero LA - a BBS user), Dan Coakley.

ST Library Report

It's been about 2 months since Brandon Murikami quit as STPublic Domain Librarian because of a pressing need to study for his upcoming SAT exams. Wish him luck. Brandon recommended me to take over the library, and when I offered my services to Mike Fulton, he said OK.

The first order of business was to resort and update the library disks and then prepare a new catalog. I wanted the new catalog to include descriptions of each file so club members would know what the programs were and what they did. (I mean, does YARD.PRg mean anything to you? No, it doesn't cut your lawn.) That was a bigger job than I thought, taking almost a month to do, but at last it's done. More about the catalog later.

My first public appearance as ST Librarian was at the April meeting, where I presented the Disk of the Month. For April, the Disk of the Month contained a Monopoly game, and a version of Yahtzee. Unfortunately, I hadn't tested the games before the meeting, and when the Yahtzee game wouldn't run, I was more than a little embarrassed. Not a very auspicious beginning as the new librarian, was it? Anyway, the Yahtzee game turned out to be missing a file, and anybody who bought the Disk of the Month can get a fixed version of Yahtzee either by downloading YAHTZEE.ARC from the ST game section of the club BBS, or by bringing me a blank disk to copy the fixed game to at the meeting break.

Things went much better in May. The catalog was finally available to club members and the Disk of the Month worked the way it was supposed to. (I put it together and tested it during halftime of the Boston-Milwaukee basketball game. The game ended in a double overtime victory for Boston, which I MISSED, so I could make it to the meeting on time. Do I sacrifice for you or what?)

The May Disk of the Month was a collection of graphic programs, starting with 3DBUILD.PRg. 3DBUILD allows the user to enter a series of lines on the screen and then produce a 3d image with anywhere from 4 to 18 sides. The number of sides produced is selected by pressing one of the function keys. The image is produced almost instantaneously, and can then be rotated about its Z axis by pressing either the HELP or UNDO key. To capture the 3DBUILD image (or any other screen image, for that matter) the utilities SNAPSHOT.TOS and SNAPSAVE.TOS were also included on the disk. To use these, SNAPSHOT is first loaded as a memory-resident utility. Then, pressing ALT and HELP will capture a screen image. After exiting whatever program has been in use,

running SNAPSAVE will save the image captured by SNAPSHOT as a .NEO file. The JRAFCON.PRГ utility was also on the disk. GRAFCON is used to convert .NEO to DEGAS images, and can also convert from low to medium or high resolution.

The next major program on the disk was ROTATION.PRГ by David Duberman, formerly of Atari and Shanner corporations. ROTATION allows the user to draw either rectangles or abstract polygons on screen and then rotate them, using a number of different commands. For instance, the increment and number of degrees of rotation can be specified, causing the object to print itself on the screen at each increment (say, every 10 degrees) as it rotates the chosen number of degrees. ROTATION permits the user to select clockwise or counter-clockwise rotation, as well as choose the point about which the object will be rotated.

Images can be saved in DEGAS format for transfer to other graphics programs.

Also on disk was the MEGABLIT2 drawing program. The primary feature of MEGABLIT2 is its large drawing area. Rather than using separate drawing screens like Degas Elite, MEGABLIT2 uses a large drawing area which the screen can be scrolled over as if it were a window on the drawing area. The drawing area is limited only by the amount of memory in the system, and since MEGABLIT2 is only about 25k in size, a large drawing area is available even in a 512k machine. Other features include arc and pie drawing routines, 2 levels of zoom, and the ability to draw a sweep of rays from a chosen point. MEGABLIT2 works in high, medium, and low resolution, and is compatible with DEGAS files.

Other programs included on the May Disk of the Month were PPFONTEД, a font editor for Publishing Partner, BANNER2.PRГ, for printing large banners, and DSLIDE.PRГ., a slideshow program by John Brochu of Advanced Software.

DSLIDE is an outstanding program, in my opinion the best slide viewer available. DSLIDE will display pictures created in any resolution on any resolution display; for instance, low resolution pictures on a monochrome monitor. It can display images in DEGAS, DEGAS ELITE, NEO, or TINY format, and allows the selection of images from any drive and any folder, regardless of where DSLIDE is located. Images can be sequenced, display time set, and titles shown, making elaborated slide productions possible. A true public domain hit.

And now, the catalog (I know you've all been waiting with baited breath, I can tell). As I said earlier, it's done. It runs about 50 pages and includes descriptions of all the files on the disks in the library. Now, if you want a copy for your

very own (indeed, at this point, how can you resist?), there are three ways to get one: First, you can buy a paper copy at the meeting for \$1.00; second, you can download it from the Miscellaneous section (Sig 7?) of the club BBS; or third, you can purchase a disk subscription to the catalog. If you purchase a subscription to the catalog, you will be able to get free updates for 1 year just by handing in your old catalog disk for a current copy.

Finally, I encourage members who have modems to place their orders on the BBS so I can fill them before the next meeting. For those without modems, you can call me with your orders at (213)437-2495 between 7:00 and 8:30 pm. If you want to mail order disks, send me a check made out to the ACAOC, Inc., and I'll mail you disks out pronto. Costs are \$4.00 per disk, plus \$.50 postage and handling.

See you at the meeting, Garry.

ACAOC Trading Post

For Sale: Atari 850 Interface & Disk Drive. File Manager (Never used!), Other programs including Galactic Chase, Turtle, Charger, Frogger, Pac-Man, and many more. Magazines, including Compute! and Antic. Complete with manuals. Take it all home for just \$200! Call Natalie or Ben at (714) 893-7780

Wanted: Information about availability of COLOR Printer Ribbons for Epson JX-80 color dot-matrix printer. Call Mike Fulton at (213) 860-9101

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Thoughts From The Throne

Bob Brodie, ACAOC President

The Inaugural Address: State of the Club

Well, here we go! Off to another exciting year of computing with our Ataris! Let me say, as I begin my year as your president, that I want to thank each of you for the faith that you are putting in me to be your president. I am well aware of the difference a good president can make in an organization such as ours. I hope that you are not only aware of that, but recognize the importance a contributing member makes, too!!!!

I look forward to a very exciting year for our club. In some ways, we may all have to change a little bit to continue to excel, as we have in the past. Let me share with you some of the ideas that I have concerning our club, computers in general, and Atari. I think that with these thoughts in mind, we'll be well set for the year ahead.

My utmost concern for the year is the eight bit Atari. I talked with another club president the other night, asking him how his eight bit group was doing. The answer was "They are dying a slow, painful death. Atari is talking about really pushing the XE game system come Christmas time. That will mean some good cartridge based games. Outside of that, well... We seem to have more eight bitters who view the computer as an appliance, rather than as hobbyists."

That last statement struck a real nerve with me. I have not one, but several Atari computers at home. I'm very pleased with the performance of them. It seems that they are capable of almost anything I ask of them, as long as I can manage to ask it correctly. But, I must confess there is more than a single grain of truth in what he said. The upcoming year will be a decisive one for the eight bit computer.

In the current issue of Atari Explorer magazine, one of the editors announced their undying support for the eight bit line. But I think it goes further than the magazines, or the software houses. I think that it really boils down to US! How many more further advancements in the eight bit do we expect, or need? Do you really need a better word processor than Paperclip? A better database than Synfile+ or Data Perfect? I must confess that for my uses, I really don't.

How about the rest of the eight bit users out there? Do you really need any other software than has already been produced for the eight bit?? If the software is there, and the machine has been stretched to its limits, then maybe it is time to move on. But which way?? I suggest

that the way to upgrade might be within the Atari eight bit itself.

Let me give you an example. We have a member who called me up one time, saying that he was sick of having to change his terminal program to ASCII every time he wanted to call the OrnJuce BBS. Wasn't there any way to make it default to ASCII. "Sure", I said. "I'm positive!" Then I proceeded to show him the wrong way. "Hmm", I said. "I KNOW that the program will do that. Let me think about how to get that done." I now know the answer, but he won't see it unless he changes modems. You see, the terminal program in question (850 Express version 3.0) makes changes in the parameters of the BBS that your calling in the dial menu, along with encoding three macros. So ideally, you just tell the program to dial the number for the OrnJuce BBS, and it will dial the number set the ASCII/ATASCII setting, set the baud rate, and hold the macros for your command. Neat, huh? The only thing is, the man does not own a modem that will autodial! He has one of the old acoustic modems, that requires you to dial the phone, then put it in the phone coupler.

He would enjoy telecomputing much more with a 1200 baud modem, and better yet, with one that supports the Hayes command set. Then he could harness the full power of 850 Express, and really see it shine!

Unfortunately, he's not alone. Do you realize that we still have calls for our library disks to be on CASSETTES? Not that I have a particular bias against cassettes, or their users. It's just that they are SLOW, and quite frankly, most of the programs written for the 8 bit are looking for a disk drive to be "out there", not a cassette. Likewise, we have some people that own 16K Atari 400's (I know, cause I'm one of them!). These folk would do better to upgrade the memory of their machine, or just get out and buy a 130XE. Unless of course, they are willing to accept the limitations of the machine that they have. (My 400 is playing game cartridges in my seven year old's room.)

I think that if there is one thing that would enhance our overall usage of computers, it would be to make sure that they were right at the state of the art in RAM. Effectively for eight bits, that means 128K. (ST owners, get ready to go to one meg or higher if you haven't already!)

One of the other computer clubs ran an article in their newsletter about a visit from a software company to their meeting. They were shown a number of fine, new game programs. When the members said, "how about porting this program that you have available on the Commodore 64 over to the Atari", the answer they got was surprising. The company was unwilling to do it, because of the 48K RAM limit of the original Atari 800. Almost all of their programmers felt

that 64K was the bare minimum of programming environment that they needed. Their studies show that the Atari 800 accounts for over 50% of all Atari 8 bit computers ever sold. (Personally, I think their data is flawed. The XL outsold the 800)

In any event, the need is clear. Let's get those machine upgraded! And don't stop with the RAM. There are plenty of aftermarket products to enhance the rest of your computers peripherals to bring them to the state of the art. Got a disk drive? You really should! Want to improve your 1050? The US Doubler/Spartados package is a good choice. Enhance your 1050 drive to true double density, and get a high powered DOS to boot! Maybe a double sided drive should be the next step. Add a Dots-Perfect to that old Epson. Sell that old 300 baud acoustic modem (or donate it to the club modem rental program!) and go to a 1200 baud direct connect, maybe even 2400 baud! How about a hard disk drive? Ever think about getting a video digitizer? Computereyes made a great digitizer for the eight bit before the ST even came out! Ever try any color printing? I've seen some wonderful printouts done with both inkjet printers (most notably Canon) and with the Epson JX-80, and Okimate 20.

Of course, you might disagree with me on the whole matter. I know several people who feel that the best upgrade for an Atari eight bit computer is an Atari 16 bit computer. Certainly, there can always be made a good case for the ST. With the advent of the Mega ST's on the horizon, I think that you will find the 520ST becoming an even bigger bargain than it already is! Atari has already released a new version of the 520ST. It's the 520STFM, the extra letters indicating a built in single sided floppy disk, and a RF modulator output for use with a composite monitor or TV set. Several dealers that I have talked to feel that the 1040ST will become the new low end ST from Atari, due to the new programs requiring more memory.

Of course, we can all increase the memory in our ST's, too. There are already a number of upgrade kits available to get you to 2-4 megabytes. I really laugh when I think about having that much RAM. I remember going to an early ST-Sig meeting and hearing members gripe about having TOS in RAM with VIP Professional. It only gave them 88K left to work with! Ha! That's more than we ever had to start with in the stock 800XL! Now I run a ramdisk on my ST with more memory than even my RAMBO XL has: 350K!

In any event, I feel very strongly that the ultimate fate of the eight bit Atari computer is in the hands of the users. If they demand, and use additional products, they will be developed. On the other hand...if they are "happy with what

they have", then they will never have MORE than what presently exists. I cannot help but think of the resounding success that Apple Computer has had with keeping the Apple II series alive. It's "Apple II Forever" campaign has been highly successful. Can you imagine such success with the Atari XL/XE line of computers?

I also hope to see more of you using the club BBS. At present it is only averaging about 18 calls a day. This is a wonderful place for us to gather and share our messages, and needs about our computers. Mike Fulton and Garry Jones spent quite a bit of time after the last business meeting "cleaning house" on the BBS. They added so many programs that many of them had to be arced just to fit them all in the ST section. C'mon, eight bitters! I know that your out there!! Where are those koala pad pictures? How about some more AMS files? Most of you that own a modem probably subscribe at least one on line service. What's new in your "turf".

Let me share with you some of my ideas for the coming year. I feel that one of the features that we sorely lacked last year was visitors to our club from software/hardware companies. To that end, I have scheduled Hybrid Arts to be with us in the month of August. They are primarily known as a MIDI software company, but now have come out with a terrific new game: MIDIMAZE.

MIDIMAZE uses the MIDI port on the ST to chain together up to 16 ST's to play one another. The game itself resembles kind of a "Blast a Happy Face" scenario. It's really a lot of fun. We will need AT LEAST 16 ST's brought to the meeting in order to show off this product, and give everybody a chance to play. Can I count on you to bring yours? I'll be sure to bring mine!

Hybrid Arts will also be showing their MIDITrack III program for the Atari 8 bit, as well as EZ-Track for the ST, and the rest of their line of MIDI programs. Should be an exciting day for music lovers and gamers alike.

In the month of September, we will not only have our Atari Fest to enjoy, but will be graced with the presence of Frank Cohen, from Regent Software. Regent is the makes of several fine applications programs for the ST. I personally use Regent Word II, Regent Base (just got the upgrade to version 1.1) and also just got the Regent Mail Merge Database program. Frank Cohen is an interesting man to talk with, a contributor to Atari magazines (Like Analog/ST-Log) and has some terrific ideas for future programs. Did you know that he is planning on releasing his own version of GDOS (called RDOS) into the public domain? He has a lot more planned, too! You'll be sure to want to make this meeting!

Not yet confirmed with an actual date is Bill

Holt of Activision Software. Many of you may remember Bill as the former Ambassador for Broderbund. He came to one of our meetings about two years ago in that capacity. He is a **WONDERFUL** speaker. Very funny, entertaining, and **VERY** generous with software giveaways! I won a copy of The Print Shop at that meeting! Activision is coming out with a series of new programs for the ST that are imported from Europe, including Film Director and Art Director. I'm hoping to see Bill here around October or November.

Let me remind you of the need to get advertisers for our newsletter. There are several companies in the area that should be advertising with us, but for one reason or another, don't. Please, help the club help you. The dealers advertising fee is usually not cash, but rather an equivalent amount in product. We in turn use their product in our software drawings, and to write reviews. Next month, I feel strongly that we will have three additional advertisers. I hope we can do better than that though. Can I count on you to help? Remember to mention to our advertisers that you are a member of our user group, and that you saw his ad in the OrNJuce. If he doesn't advertise, ask him if he will consider it, then call me with his name and number and I'll visit him!

I'll finish of this initial column with a round of thanks to people who have meant very much to me. These are people and friends that I respect and admire for their contributions to Atari Computers, and/or our club.

Thank you Mike Fulton. You put out one of the finest newsletters in the country, and I mean that sincerely! I'll never have my column in late again. Thank you for your willingness to take over so many responsibilities in the club when no one else would. No one should ever have to start supporting a completely **NEW** computer as president, add more meetings, and change the meeting place in the same year. I look forward to more great newsletters, and spending time with one who I admire so much.

Thank you Erika Bentley. I appreciate your steadfast desire to see our club excel, and your willingness to have us all invade your home monthly for the business meeting. We **ALL** owe you a debt for allowing the BBS to be in your home, plus the many other tasks that you do.

Thank you Garry Jones. You are in the process of building the finest library for any computer I have seen. Keep up the fine work! I appreciate your efforts for us all.

Thank you Russell Kavanagh and Al Cheser. Your time with ACAOC gave the rest of us who follow something to aspire to. If we can maintain your spirit of enthusiasm, and encourage the same cooperation, we will have done well indeed.

Thank you Herb Huey. You made my life as eight bit librarian **MUCH** more interesting. There ought to be an award for most disks donated by a member: you'd win it, hands down.

Thank you Sharon Brown. I really loved my work as eight bit librarian. There is so much yet to explore and learn about this marvelous computer! I'm comforted to know that the work will go on in your very capable hands! (PS: If you run out of things, give Herb a call!)

Finally, thank you Bill Wilkinson. Your column in **COMPUTE!** magazine of several years ago spoke of users groups as a terrific source of help, and enjoyment. That column was the inspiration for me to seek out this group of Atari users. My life has been changed! Everything that you said in that column has come true, and more.

MIDIMaze Demonstration

The August 9 meeting of the ACAOC will feature special guest **HYBRID ARTS**, who will show off their **MIDI Music** software for both lines of Atari Computers.

Also shown will be the new **MIDIMAZE** game, which allows up to 16 players on separate Atari ST computers to be hooked together through the MIDI ports on one huge game!

To show **MIDIMaze** properly, we will need volunteers to bring their ST computers to the meeting. Please contact Bob Brodie at (213) 691-0107, or Mike Fulton at (213) 860-9101.

Of Eternal Triangles And Distant Points

(Second in an intermittent series)

by Sharon Brown,
ACAOC OrnJuce

It is a quiet evening in a Native American village somewhere on the plains. Three tribeswomen, sitting on rugs about the fire in a teepee, are engaged in a maternal boasting session.

"Look at my new bearskin rug," the first woman says, shifting so the others can admire its beauty. "My son caught the bear, wrestled it to the ground, and skinned it alive - with nothing but his bare hands."

"Indeed you have a boy to be proud of," remarks the second woman. "However, I also have a new rug." She gestures down at the buffalo skin on which she sits. "My son singlehandedly separated the leader from a stampeding herd, jumped on its back, rode it until it dropped from exhaustion, and hauled the creature back on his shoulders. Not only did I get this elegant rug, but the tribe will have meat for a month."

The third woman, daughter of the chief and famous in her own right as three-time champion of her tribe's annual Hulk Hogan look-alike contest, glances wistfully at the hippopotamus skin on which she is parked. "As you know, my husband spends most of his time in distant lands hunting exotic animals. As a result, I have not been blessed with children." Suddenly she brightens. "Please recall, however, the arm-wrestling contest at last month's ceremonial beer-bash. Even working together, your sons could do no better than to wrestle me to a draw."

Now, then, what does this little anecdote represent?

What's that? You don't know and you don't care? You think I've gone off the deep end entirely? Well, stick with me. There is a point to all this, and it has to do with your Atari after all. Now, get out your Atari 8-bit machine (or just picture it in your mind.) Set it for Graphics 8 and Color 1. Execute the following statements:

```
PLOT 2,3
DRAWTO 7,11
```

You have just drawn a line on your monitor screen (or the inside wall of your brain). Using the width of a pixel as a unit of measure, how long is that line? (Even though we know better, we will assume for the time being that the height of a pixel is the same as its width.) If you don't know, stick around. If you do know, this

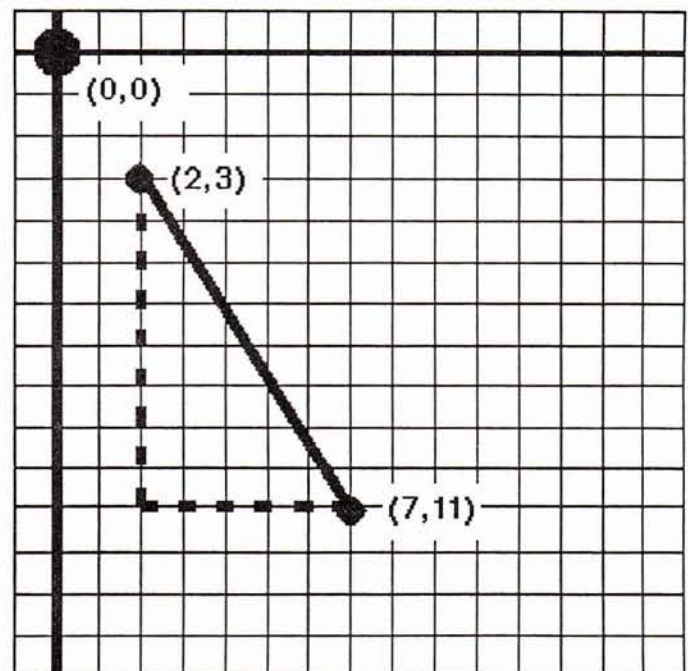
class is optional (but you still might pick up a few interesting tidbits later on.)

Well, let's step into our time machine again. This time we will head for Crotona, a bustling Greek colonial town in what is now Italy. Here, in about 540 B.C., we encounter the Greeks' answer to the "Moonies." Led by a man named Pythagoras, this cult learns to worship numbers, believe in reincarnation, never eat beans (probably because of crowded dormitories in their headquarters), and always sign only the name of their brotherhood to their writings and discoveries.

In spite of the religious trappings of the cult, some of their teachings were of enormous importance in the development of mathematics. The most useful of all their teachings is known today as the Pythagorean theorem. (A theorem is a mathematical proposition that can be proved by logical methods.) This theorem deals with right triangles - triangles which have one "square" corner. It tells us that the square of the length of the longest side of such a triangle (called the hypotenuse), is equal to the sum of the squares of the two shorter sides. Written algebraically, this theorem is expressed as:

$$c^2 = a^2 + b^2.$$

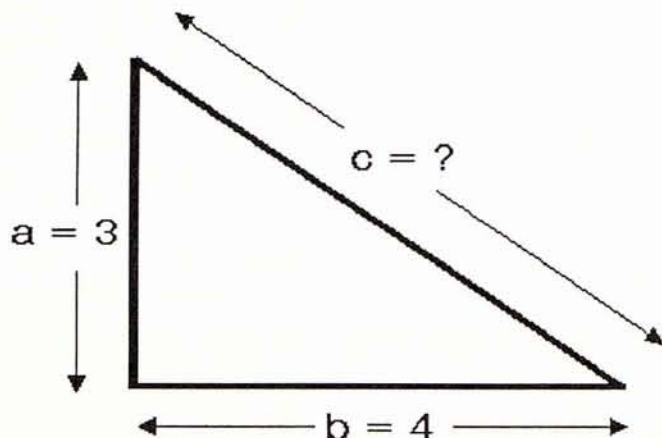
Let's look at an easy example. If you have a right triangle with short sides of 3 units and 4 units, how long is the hypotenuse?



According to Pythagoras, you square the length of each of the short sides (multiply them by themselves) and add the results together. So,

$3 \times 3 = 9$, $4 \times 4 = 16$, and $9 + 16 = 25$. Twenty-five is the square of the length of the hypotenuse. To find its actual length, you must take the square root of this value. This is the number which, when multiplied by itself, equals 25. In this simple example, the answer is obviously 5 (because $5 \times 5 = 25$).

Now, consider this. The length of the hypotenuse is equal to the distance between the two points at the corners of the triangle. Going back to the Atari graphics problem posed earlier, let's draw it out on a set of "Ataresian" coordinates (see my previous article - "Descartes Before de Horse").



Notice that you can place a right triangle on the coordinates with its hypotenuse coinciding with the line in question. Notice also that the length of the horizontal side of the triangle is $7 - 2 = 5$. The vertical length is $11 - 3 = 8$. So the square of the distance between the points is $25 + 64 = 89$. The distance is the square root of 89. This isn't as easy to figure out as the square root of 25. But our Atari's can do it. Execute the statement

? SQR(89)

in BASIC and it will tell you that the distance is 9.43398113 pixel-widths. Using this same method, you can find the "pixel-length" of the distance between any two points on the screen.

Oh, there is one slight complication to all this. As you probably know, Atari pixels are really rectangles, not squares. Their shape depends on the graphics mode you are using. It also depends, to a lesser extent, on your own monitor. This means that a horizontal line ten pixels long will not be the same length as a vertical line ten pixels high. If we establish the horizontal "pixel-width" as our unit, we can find a "fudge-factor" to convert vertical lengths so that they are also expressed in "pixel-widths." Since monitors vary, it is best to find this factor for yourself. (Remember the factor will be

different in different graphics modes.) Here is a step-by-step method for doing this.

1. Set your screen to the chosen graphics mode. In modes with a text window, you can do all the steps in immediate mode. In the GTIA modes you will have to write a short program to draw the lines and hold them on the screen.

2. Using PLOT and DRAWTO, draw a long vertical line - the longer the better as long as you can comfortably lay a ruler along it. Measure it in millimeters or sixteenths of an inch.

3. Draw a horizontal line with the same number of pixels as the vertical line. Measure it in the same way.

4. Divide the vertical measurement by the horizontal measurement. (Use a calculator or your Atari.) Round the result off to two or three decimal places and record it along with the number of the graphics mode you were using. This is your conversion factor. On my system in Graphics 8, this factor is 1.094.

Let's apply this factor to the problem we did before. The horizontal distance is still 5 pixel-widths, because that is how we defined it. To convert the vertical distance (8 pixels) to pixel-widths, we multiply it by our conversion factor - $8 \times 1.094 = 8.752$. Now we square the sides, getting 25 and 76.598. Adding them together and taking the square root, we find that the "real" distance between the points, expressed in pixel-widths, is 10.079.

Well, that's all for today, kiddies. Oh, about the Native American women. If you haven't already figured it out, "the squaw on the hippopotamus is equal to the sons of the squaws on the other two hides."

The September 13 ACAOC
Meeting will feature
special guest **Frank
Cohen of Regent
Software (really!).
Don't Miss it!**

Public Domain Software Hits

By Garry Jones,
ACAOC OrnJuce

Well, here's some more information about free Atari ST public domain software. For each program, I'll give the name of the program, show if it is a regular program or a desk accessory, give the most common filename, and the approximate size of the file. (Please note that because of problems with some versions of Xmodem in terminal programs and/or BBS programs, file sizes are sometimes rounded off to an even multiple of 128 bytes when uploaded or downloaded.)

Note Pad

Desk Accessory
NOTEPAD.ACC
16640 bytes

Startroniks' Note Pad provides a small line-oriented editor for note taking or display from within any GEM program. Note Pad works in color or monochrome, can be dragged anywhere onscreen, and provides 15 lines of text with a 37 character line length. The maximum size text length is eight of these pages.

Note Pad does not have wordwrap, but using the cursor arrows or pointing and clicking the mouse will move the cursor to a new line. There is an insert function which can be invoked by pressing the insert key, although insert works only on a line by line basis and does not push text down to the next line. Also, there is no change in the appearance of the page to indicate whether insert is on or off.

Outside of the cursor movement and insert commands, Note Pad's six main commands appear onscreen as boxes labeled NEXT, PRIOR, LOAD, SAVE, CLEAR, and EXIT.

NEXT advances one page, while PRIOR returns to the previous page. LOAD calls a file selector box, and SAVE copies the current file to the chosen drive, although the program's LOAD function works better if all files are saved to drive A:. CLEAR empties Note Pad of the current file and EXIT quits the program.

If Note Pad is not cleared before closing, it will retain and display the current file the next time it's called provided the power hasn't been switched off.

Like most public domain programs, there is no documentation for Note Pad, but it makes up for this by being easy to use. The lack of wordwrap is a real limitation. There are a couple

of minor bugs, but none are serious enough to cause text loss or system crashes. The first I've already mentioned, the program's difficulties in loading files from drive B:. Always saving to drive A: solves this, although any files saved to drive B: can always be copied to drive A: or read with a word processor or from the desktop. Note Pad's second bug is its insistence on creating a dummy file with the label .\$\$\$ on drive A:. I have no idea what this file is for, but it always appears empty and can be deleted with no ill effects.

Note Pad is a useful program for taking brief notes, but it's no replacement for a word processor with wordwrap. Its advantages are its small size (16640 bytes), its convenience and ease of use, and its price (free).

Print

Print Utility
PRINT.PRГ
8488 bytes

PRINT.PRГ is a handy utility for printing from the desktop. Its purpose is to provide some basic formatting capabilities otherwise not available with the Atari's print file command.

Presenting a dialog box onscreen, five mouse-clickable buttons labeled List, Print, Book, Page, and Cancel offer a choice between three basic formatting options plus page eject and quit. The List option prints the file as a listing, with very little left margin. This is a useful format for printing program listings as it leaves plenty of space to the right side of the page for penciling in changes and comments. The Print option prints out a file exactly as it is stored on the disk. Book, the best format for text files, inserts page breaks in the file and increases the right margin slightly to center the text on the page. Page advances the printer paper, and can be used to bring up a fresh sheet. Cancel means what it says, and terminates the program.

Quick and easy to use, PRINT.PRГ is probably best suited to printing short files or draft copies when it's not convenient to load a word processor to take advantage of its greater formatting capabilities.

Set Verify

Desk Accessory
SETVERIF.ACC
8880 bytes

For users looking for more speed from their disk drives, Set Verify uses a different approach than Format+, making it possible to turn off the computer's disk write verify function. The write

verify function requires the disk drive to make two passes at the disk for each disk track written. The first pass writes the data to disk and the second pass reads and compares it to a buffer containing the data to determine the accuracy of the data on the disk. With write verify off, the disk drive only makes one pass per track.

Installed as a desk accessory, Set Verify offers the option of turning write verify on or off by clicking on a labeled box. With verify turned off, disk write speed increases by 30 to 50 percent, working at about the same speed as disk read. Used along with Format+, disk performance can be dramatically improved.

There is a danger to using Set Verify, however. Without the computer's automatic data verification, it is possible for occasional errors to appear in the disk data. Errors are likely to be few because the computer automatically verifies disk integrity after formatting whether write verify is on or not. This prevents disk flaws from affecting the data, and if the disk drive has been operating reliably, data accuracy will be satisfactory for most tasks. When in doubt, however, Set Verify's installation as a desk accessory makes it possible to turn verify back on at any time.

Personally, I use both Format+ and Set Verify without problem. For anyone experimenting with or using Format+, Set Verify is worth a try.

ST World Magazine

Reviewed By *Garry Jones*,
ACAOC OrnJuice

ST World is a tabloid format publication which first appeared about a year and a half ago. Put out 10 times a year, it costs \$2.00 per issue or \$15.00 for a subscription. Qualified readers, such as bookstore owners or consumer electronics dealers, can obtain complimentary subscriptions.

Interestingly, ST World's copy has always been prepared on an ST computer. Visually acceptable since the beginning, thumbing through back issues of ST World provides a history of desktop publishing as the appearance of the publication has steadily improved as ST desktop publishing systems have grown in sophistication. Currently using Abacus' Textpro and Paintpro, Softlogik's Publishing Partner, and a QMS PS800 laser printer, ST World's appearance is indistinguishable in most respects from copy produced on much more expensive systems, showing the considerable capability of the ST as a professional graphics tool.

As visually presentable as the paper was in

the beginning, the writing in the early issues was almost equally objectionable. Fraught with grammatical errors and incomplete sentences, it was almost as if no one had ever heard the terms "proof reading" or "copy editing." (At least the spelling was good; hooray for spelling checkers.) More recent issues do show considerable improvement in the quality of the writing, however.

As the name implies, ST World focuses exclusively on the Atari ST computer, with an emphasis on timely reviews and product announcements. Most of the reviews are fairly brief, but usually cover the subject well enough to give the flavor of the program being reviewed. On the plus side, ST World maintains a good balance between game, hardware, MIDI, business and productivity software, and programming language reviews. Generally, ST World seems to try to select products for review that can be reviewed positively, as I found no truly negative reviews in several issues. In ST World's defense, however, their reviewers did point out the ease with which text can be lost in Zoomracks, and the slowness of play and lack of information available to the player in the game Gateway.

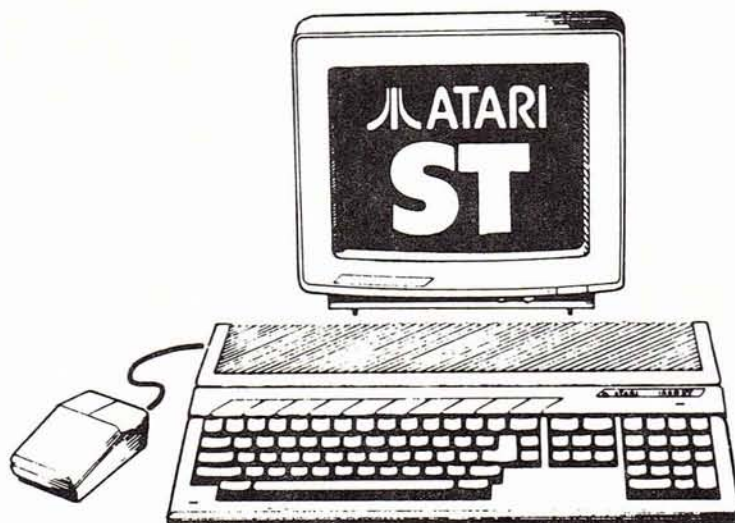
While featuring mostly reviews and product announcements, ST World occasionally prints articles covering major computer shows, like COMDEX, CES, and the Atarifests (maybe the clones don't care, but they are a big deal to us Atarians.) ST World has also published articles on programming, and recently, has begun a series on MIDI by Malcolm Cecil, head of Electronic Music Publishing House.

Overall, I like ST World. It has a good cross section of reviews, and probably the most up to date product announcements of any Atari publication available. The poor editing in the early issues irritated me ("Don't these people know what a sentence is?" I wondered), but the copy editing is much improved in the current issues, leaving nothing truly objectionable.

ST World is available in most Atari computer stores, and subscriptions and back issues can be ordered from ST World at 1385 Cleveland Loop Drive, Roseburg, OR 97470-9622.

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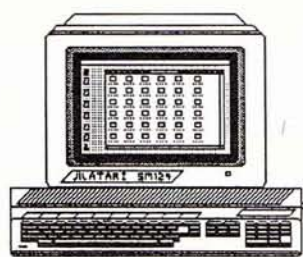


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STricks By Mike Fulton

The Night Before...

As I type this, I'm in beautiful downtown Santa Clara, in room 418 of the Doubletree Hotel. From my window, I can look right down at the Santa Clara Convention Center, site of the 1987 **World Of Atari** show, which is running June 19-20. I'm here because Cal Com is here; we have a booth at the show. Because we had to set up things in the booth ahead of time, I was able to walk around a bit before the show starts tomorrow morning and get a sneak preview of the show. I saw some interesting things, both then, and later during the show. Because I mainly concentrated on ST items, I decided to make the show the topic of this month's column.

Atari Laser Printer

In Atari's booth you can find the Atari Laser Printer hooked up to a Atari Mega ST. I saw them remove it from its package to be set up in the booth. Since it was being taken out of a completed, printed box, I'd have to guess that it is practically ready to go. During the show, Atari was showing it off with the latest pre-release version of the **Microsoft Write** word processor. (I also heard that **Easy-Draw** and a few other packages, including a new CAD program called **Athena II**, were shown working with the printer occasionally, but I only saw **Write**.)

The Atari Laser Printer will come with a GEM printer driver & fonts for 300 dots/inch output, and also a Diablo 630 daisywheel printer emulation driver. (GEM printer driver is the correct term for a printer driver loaded by the GDOS portion of GEM.)

The way things are set up right now, in order to do full page, full resolution graphics, the Atari Laser Printer will require at least 2 megabytes of memory in the Atari ST computer that is controlling it. It works only with Atari ST computers, through the DMA port, and ST computers with less memory are restricted to using the Diablo 630 daisywheel printer emulation mode. However, it is possible that in the future a way will be found to do full page graphics with less memory. The problem is that a full page of graphics is over 1 megabyte of

data. Hopefully, future versions of the software driver will be able to work on pages a little bit at a time, with whatever memory is available.

When I got to play with the printer, it was with **Microsoft Write**. (Which looked done, and didn't cause me any grief during my short time with it. But when I asked Atari's representatives "When?" I was told to ask Microsoft.) It produced very good results, although not absolutely the best I've ever seen out of a laser printer. There are differences between different laser printers, especially between ones using different printer engines (the part that actually moves the paper and zaps it with the laser). The Atari Laser Printer on display was using a TEC (Tokyo Electronics Corp.) engine, while most current machines use one by Canon.

Atari Mega ST

The Mega ST series computers were also being unpackaged, and early on there was a rumor going around that Atari would have some to give to dealers to be sold at the show! However, this turned out to be just a rumor, and you'll still have to wait a few more weeks. Right now, the release date of the Mega ST computers looks like the end of July or so, wait til before you rush down to your dealer.

I can't really say too much about the Mega ST computers that has not been said before. They were there, and Atari was very free about letting people use them. They didn't much care about who came up and played with them during the show. In fact, several of the software companies at the show brought stuff over to see how it worked on the Mega ST. Although the machines did have the blitter chip and new version of TOS, I didn't hear of anything that wouldn't run. (With one exception that had already been fixed before the show: the first version of GFA BASIC.)

New TOS & The Blitter Chip

First off, I must say "No!" No, I don't know when the blitter chip and new version of TOS will be made available to the public. However, the new version of TOS is now available to developers (I got mine early the first day of the show and put the chips in that night, more later), and the documentation for the blitter chip is now available in the Atari Developer's Section on Compuserve. Also, Atari has a limited number of Mega STs available to current developers.

It has been said, although not confirmed, that Atari is considering one of two different means of adding a blitter upgrade to current ST computers. The first method involves a

"daughterboard" which would plug into the ST in the position currently occupied by the 68000 chip, which would be removed and put into the daughterboard. This would be very difficult, if not impossible, for most people to do themselves because it requires that the 68000 be desoldered from the motherboard.

The second method would be to swap the motherboard completely. This would be very simple in most cases, especially with the 520ST. However, then you run into the problem of what to do with machines which have had their memory upgraded. Or machines which have clock chips added inside. (I do not refer to the battery backup devices which fit on the bottom of the keyboard and power the keyboard processor, but rather to the complete clock chips which go piggyback on a ROM chip. Frankly, I think it's dumb to add an entirely new clock when you just need to keep the built-in one running. But that's another discussion.)

Whichever or whatever method Atari chooses to use for the blitter upgrade, we'll have to wait and see. I was not able to get any real details out of anyone from Atari about this.

TOS: Stardate 8704.22, The Adventure Continues

The new version of TOS I got from Atari's Cindy Clavern at the show is dated 4/22/87, and offers some welcome changes over the old version. First of all, the GEMDOS routines have been cleaned up, and now disk file access is much, much faster. Perhaps by as much as 40-50% in some cases. There is especially an improvement in reading and writing small chunks of data. And programs now load much faster. If you have a hard disk with a lot of stuff in some folders, you'll notice this difference right away the first time you load a program.

Other changes include the addition of a new, faster, disk format option to the format routine of the XBIOS. The new version of the GEM Desktop now uses this faster format. This means that the GEM Desktop now does essentially the same thing as those "fast format" programs, although the disk capacity remains the same. Combined with the new GEMDOS routines, this can make a huge improvement in disk access times.

Of course, the blitter chip is now supported by the Line-A interface. If the chip is present in the machine, then the GEM Desktop includes a choice in the OPTIONS menu for "Blitter". This allows the user to turn the blitter on and off, in case of software that does not work properly with it turned on. A checkmark appears in the menu when the blitter is active. If the blitter is not present or enabled, then software routines do the blitting chores, just like in the present

machines (although the routines have been somewhat improved, speedwise, over the old version). If the chip is there, then the Line-A routines set it up and let it do the work.

There are other changes that aren't as noticeable at first, but can really make a big difference in some applications. First of all, you can now smooth scroll through a window by simply holding the mouse button down on the arrow or page controls, instead of having to repeatedly push the button. This isn't any faster on a machine without a blitter chip, but it is easier. But with a blitter chip, it makes scrolling through a window **MUCH** faster and easier.

There was a bug in the GEM AES in the older version of TOS which caused the system to crash when you entered the underscore character (Shift-minus) in some dialog boxes. This is now fixed.

Let's see... On the Desktop, besides the faster disk formatting, there are a few other changes. Fewer disk swaps are needed when copying files on a single disk drive system. (Finally!) ALL characters are now shown when you print a file to the screen, instead of just those with ASCII values of 32-127. And "Print Screen" and "Save Desktop" now have an alert to ask if you are sure before acting.

There are some changes which may affect the compatibility of some software packages. For example, the game Xtron does not work with the new TOS, although I have not had any problems with any of the other programs I have tried. (Which includes most of those on my hard disk.) I would expect those programs which do not work to be quickly updated in most cases. I'd tell you more here, but these kinds of changes are mostly of interest only to hard-core programmers. (Ask me on the BBS if you really need to know.)

Atari PC

Yes, I know that this is a column about the ST, but this is short. Atari was also showing a couple of Atari PCs, but close inspection seemed to indicate that these were hand-built, not production models. Quite frankly, I'm not really all that concerned about the Atari PC, although some Atari users seem to think that if Atari puts out a PC, then they'll have to run right out and buy one. Several times, I've read things in other club's newsletters where people are complaining to the void (or the Great God Atari, whichever you like; they are functionally equivalent in most cases) that they can't afford another computer, or can't fit one on their desk, or some other such noise.

I tend to look at it this way: If I really wanted a PC, I would have bought or built one by now. Just because Atari decides to put their name on

one and sell it for a few dollars less is no reason to start jumping over myself to worry about getting something I didn't think I needed before. If I developed a need for a PC, then I'd be more interested. But I'm not gonna be interested just because it says Atari on it.

On the other hand, if I don't mind things being just a bit slow, I can just go buy **PC-Ditto**. This is a new software-based MSDOS emulator which has just recently become available. And it works. I have personally used it with several MSDOS programs, including Word Perfect, WordStar, Lotus 1-2-3, dBASE III+, Qmodem, and more. Most things run about 2/3 to 3/4 the speed of a PC. It includes support for emulating monochrome and color PC graphics cards. More info on this next month after I've had a better chance to mess with it.

New Software

New software for the ST that I saw at the show included the new **Alice: The Personal Pascal** programming language, from **Looking Glass Software**. This is a new version of Pascal with some very unique features. First of all, it's the first interpreted version of Pascal for the ST. This means that you don't have to go through the slow edit-compile-run loop that is required of Pascal compilers. But if you stick to standard Pascal functions, you can compile your program with **OSS Personal Pascal** when you get everything finished. Also, the editor is designed to help beginners learn Pascal by offering help with syntax and basic Pascal language programming methods.

I was also able to get a look at, and a copy of, the new **Athena II** CAD program from **Iliad Software**. It includes features usually found in more expensive CAD programs, such as auto-dimensioning. Printer/Plotter output is provided through GEM Metafiles and a special output program, and there is the possibility of trading files with other programs such as Easy-Draw which use standard GEM Metafiles. (Athena II prints/plots by outputting printer/plotter commands to a GEM metafile, which then can be used by the output program to produce output on any supported device, including Atari's new Laser Printer. This is the same method used by other programs such as CAD-3D 2.0 and Easy-Draw.)

Hybrid Arts was showing off both their MIDI music software and their new **MIDIMAZE** game. They had 12 STs hooked together through the MIDI ports and playing together. The idea is to pilot a Happy Face through a maze, shown in 3D on screen. If you see another Happy Face (which is either the computer or another player on another ST somewhere down the line of MIDI connections), then you have to

kill it before it kills you. The catch phrase for this game is "Put on Kill a Happy Face."

Publishing Partner was being shown off by **SoftLogik** in their booth, along with some new font disks. At this time, they have 1 disk of their own with 3 additional fonts (which are licensed from Century Software, who makes Postscript fonts for the Apple Macintosh/LaserWriter combination) and they are also distributing font packages and clip art from another company called **Font Factory**.

Migraph was showing off **Easy-Draw** and the **Supercharger**. The Supercharger is a program which allows you to convert Degas and Neochrome (and possibly other formats, I forgot to ask) pictures into GEM bit-image format. (This is a standard screen file format supported by GEM, where DEGAS and Neochrome simply save the screen memory for the drawing. The advantage is that it is not machine or device dependant. You could load such a file into a GEM program on the IBM PC with no problems.) The resulting file can then be integrated with Easy-Draw pictures and text. The Supercharger also allows the use of image files created by scanners and digitizers. This would allow you to scan things at 300DPI and then print them at any resolution supported by your printer.

Migraph was also showing off their new **M-CADD** program. This is a very full featured CAD program (I am beginning to sound like a broken record here, aren't I?) with the ability to add additional program modules and move files into Easy-Draw for further manipulations. This should be out sometime in the early fall.

Regent Software was showing off their stuff in the B & C Computervisions booth. Regent's **Frank Cohen** could be found showing off the most recent version of **Regent Base**.

There was more, but that is the highlights. These small (by the standards of COMDEX or CES, anyway) shows are seldom used to make any major product announcements, but rather are used to allow the public to gain familiarity with already-announced and currently available products.

That's a Wrap

Well, I guess I'll sign off now until next month. We are going to drive back on Sunday morning (tomorrow), and I've got to pack up. I've got my 520ST set up here in my hotel room to avoid going into withdrawal symptoms and so I can work on this article. (Oh yeah, I'm trying to get a program into shape to show off to a software publisher, who should be by my room any minute now. Wish me luck.)

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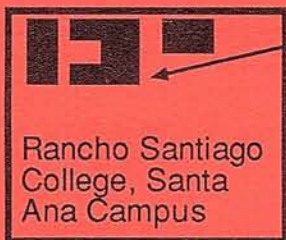
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The Atari Computer Association of Orange County features support for the users of the Atari ST Computers and Atari 400/800/XL/XE Computers.

The meetings of the ACAOC are on the **Second Sunday of Each Month**, at **1:00pm**, in **Room W-101** of the Phys. Ed. building of **Rancho Santiago College**, in Santa Ana, 1 mile south of the Garden Grove Freeway (22), and 1 mile west of the Santa Ana Freeway (5).

ACAOC Inc. (Atari Computer Association of Orange County) is a non-profit corporation, and is not in any way affiliated with Atari Corporation or Atari Games Inc.

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Upcoming Meeting Dates

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